

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 9, 1963.

The SPEAKER (Hon. T. C. Stott) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**HOUSING LOANS.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Has the Premier a reply to my recent question about reducing the normal rate of interest to subscribers to the Superannuation Fund who obtain a loan for house purchase?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The President of the South Australian Superannuation Fund Board (Mr. Bowden) reports as follows:

The Superannuation Fund Board is at present lending money on mortgage at an interest rate of 5 per cent per annum. This is the same rate as that adopted by other large lending institutions, with the exception of the War Service Homes Commission and the Commonwealth Savings Bank. The board considers that since the moneys of the fund are invested on behalf of all contributors, it would be unjust to permit a small minority of contributors to borrow moneys at a rate of interest lower than that charged non-contributors since this would confer a special benefit on this small minority to the detriment of all other contributors.

LIME.

Mr. FERGUSON: Last Friday the Minister of Labour and Industry declared open a new type of lime kiln at Stansbury for Dehydrated Lime Ltd. Will the Minister of Works ask his colleague, the Minister of Roads, whether any experiments have been conducted with lime for stabilizing road foundations in this State and, if they have, will he obtain a report?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I will obtain a report for the honourable member.

BAILIFFS.

Mr. LOVEDAY: A short time ago a bailiff of Reid Murray Ltd. called at two houses at Iron Baron—one at 9 p.m. and one at 11 p.m.—to repossess furniture and goods, without prior notice to the occupiers. In one instance at least, the people had endeavoured to make regular payments to the firm which originally had the contract and which was taken over by Reid Murray, but the local firm would not accept their money. Despite that, the reposessor arrived without notice and took the goods away at night. In the case of one family he worked from 11 p.m. to 1 a.m. loading the goods. In this case, the householder

received a telegram a week later informing him that the bailiff would be arriving. If I give the Premier full details, will he investigate these matters to ensure that justice is done to people in these circumstances?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes.

EGG PULP.

Mr. McKEE: Recently I asked a question about the varying prices charged by the South Australian Egg Board for egg pulp, and whilst I appreciated the Premier's reply I am afraid that it did not answer my question specifically. Apparently the prices charged by the Egg Board give big business a decided advantage over small business. I understand that the price variations can represent a saving of many thousands of pounds to big business. When a small business has to pay more for raw material it is only natural that it has to charge more for its products. Will the Premier investigate this matter with a view to bringing about a fairer method of trading whereby small business can enjoy the conditions experienced by big business?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The honourable member is now discussing the question of quantitative discounts which have been a feature of commercial practice for at least 50 years. A person can sell a large quantity in one transaction at a cheaper unit cost than he can in small individual sales. I will see that this matter is referred to the Minister of Agriculture. The Egg Board comes under the control of the Agriculture Department and the Minister will take the question up with Mr. Anderson, the Chairman of the board.

TEXT BOOKS.

Mr. CASEY: Recently the Peterborough High School Council reviewed the question of text books for certain classes being changed each year. It was particularly concerned with the text books for next year's Leaving class. It has been learned that the English Committee of the Public Examinations Board has decided to review all English books for the Leaving. The council believes that this is harsh treatment to parents, particularly as the poetry book in use this year will be wholly incorporated in next year's poetry book. Other factors were mentioned, including the difficulty of disposing of the discarded books and the handing down of these books to other members of a family. Will the Minister of Education take this matter up with the English Committee of the Public Examinations Board and obtain a report on why books have to be changed each year?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: I am not aware of the circumstances outlined by the honourable member, but I should not think that it is a drastic decision involving a change in a text book prescribed for compulsory reading. I should think that the decision would relate to books recommended as suitable for independent reading or study. I shall be only too pleased to endeavour to obtain the information. I do not think it would be proper for me to make direct inquiries from the English Committee of the board, or even of the board, because the Chairman seems to take umbrage if I or any member of Parliament questions a decision of the board. Happily I have eight nominees, including the Director of Education and the Superintendent of High Schools, and I shall endeavour to ascertain from one or both of those nominees whether they can let me have any information to satisfy the honourable member and the House.

FREEWAYS.

Mr. COUMBE: Has the Minister of Works obtained a reply from the Minister of Roads to my question regarding the recently announced freeway plan in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that it will be necessary for a comprehensive traffic and transportation survey to be undertaken before the final location of the freeway system can be determined. This survey, which will require the services of consultants working in conjunction with the traffic staff of the transportation authorities, will not be completed before 1965.

The American system of financing major projects included the use of loan funds on the part of State highway authorities, and by the issue of bonds on the part of private authorities. These loans and bonds were then normally covered by the collection of tolls. It is understood, however, that since the introduction of the interstate and defence highways system wherein the Federal Government finances the principal road system by the use of direct road user taxation the tendency has been away from the building of new toll road facilities.

The last paragraph is not in reply to the information sought by the honourable member today, but it is an answer to a recent question on the matter, and I have given the information for that reason.

MURRAY BRIDGE CROSSING.

Mr. BYWATERS: I have been concerned, with other people in my district, about a

crossing four miles east of Murray Bridge where fatalities have occurred over the years. After continual representations the Government agreed to build a bridge over the crossing. I notice that the bridge is completed so far as the contractors are concerned. Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week about when the Highways Department would carry out the necessary roadwork to make this bridge usable in preference to having the present dangerous crossing?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Minister of Roads informs me that the bridge has been completed and that it is planned to complete the earthworks and road pavement so that the bridge can be opened during November.

FREE BUS PLAN.

Mr. FRED WALSH: My question, which is directed to the Premier and is in two parts, is related to the following report that appeared in the *Advertiser* yesterday morning about a free bus service, under the heading "Free bus plan approved":

A proposal for a free bus service for shoppers from Keswick bridge to the city by way of Park Terrace and Victoria Avenue, Rose Park, paid for by city stores, would be "considered favourably," the Unley Council decided last night.

I view with deep concern this proposal by city stores. It will compete with the Municipal Tramways Trust service and other services which I would not be permitted to go into, and which are required to conform to certain standards and pay award rates. I am concerned with the protection of those people who use the service. First, are operators of a public transport service of this character required to obtain a permit from the Transport Control Board? Secondly, what protection is assured the users of this service in the event of death or injury arising from an accident in which one of these vehicles is involved?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I believe this proposal has been the subject of investigation by the Minister of Works, who is obtaining reports from the Crown Solicitor regarding its implications. When they are available I am certain the Minister will furnish information for the honourable member if he seeks it.

PORT AUGUSTA LAND.

Mr. RICHES: Last week the Minister of Works undertook to obtain for me a statement from his colleague, the Minister of Roads, on the question of making land available at Port Augusta for the purposes of the Education Department and the town. Has he a reply?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that detailed planning of the proposed new Great Western bridge and its approaches within the Corporation of Port Augusta is currently in hand by departmental staff. Pending the outcome of this investigation and the fixing of the exact route, it is not considered desirable that any land be released for other purposes.

FERRIES.

Mr. CURREN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to the question I asked last week regarding ferry approaches at Berri and Kingston?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that preparation of plans for the approaches to enable the ferry crossings at Kingston and Berri to be duplicated is in hand. It is expected that tenders will be called for the construction of the approaches during next December.

PARLIAMENT HOUSE LIFTS.

Mr. JENNINGS: I do not know whether my question should be addressed to the Minister of Works or to you, Mr. Speaker, but I shall be guided by your opinion. It concerns the lifts in this building. I can say, I think without exaggeration, that these lifts are the most erratic, unreliable and temperamental lifts in South Australia.

Mr. Clark: And antiquated.

Mr. JENNINGS: Yes. Some members have missed important engagements through being caught in one of the lifts.

Mr. Bywaters: Sometimes they get caught when there is a division.

Mr. JENNINGS: At times members suffer inconvenience when they go to a lift and find a notice that it is temporarily suspended for inspection. I think they must be the most inspected and least respected lifts in Australia. What concerns me is that at some time a member will miss an important division through being caught in a lift. The lifts, unfortunately, are so objectionable that what principally concerns me is that it is likely to be an Opposition member who is caught.

The SPEAKER: The lifts come under the jurisdiction of the Speaker. I have had some complaints about their being out of order, and I will have the matter investigated to see whether they can be improved. Regarding temperament, I notice that the lifts are not the only things in this House that are temperamental.

TIME CLOCKS.

Mr. LANGLEY: On August 29 I asked the Premier whether, as time clocks were used extensively in the heating of water at off-peak times and as they had a special rating, it was compulsory to have them installed in houses. On September 4 the Premier said in reply to a subsequent question that the Assistant Manager of the Electricity Trust (Mr. Huddleston) had reported that a time switch was required with the off-peak water heating tariff to limit the hours during which the special low charges were available, and that no charge was made for either the time switch or the meter in connection with this tariff. Will the Premier say whether it is compulsory to install time clocks in houses?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will get a report for the honourable member.

TOWN PLANNING.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I move:

That in the opinion of this House the report of the Town Planning Committee should be an interim development plan and that provision should be made for the lodging and consideration of objections and the co-ordination of the work of the local governing bodies to give effect to the plan as revised from time to time.

I wanted to obtain the assistance of the Parliamentary Draftsman to frame my motion, but because of pressure of business was unable to do so. Although there is much value in the committee's plan, the Government has been unable to tell the House what it is likely to do with it. I consider that as a Parliament we should endeavour to arrive at something definite in the interests of this State's future. If during this speech I omit to make every point that should be made, I may be able to clarify the position later.

Originally, the Premier admitted that the cost of the report of the Town Planning Committee was £18,901. This figure was subsequently corrected to £31,000, but there is still an element of doubt in my mind as to how much less than £150,000 it did cost. I am not prepared to accept everything contained in the report but, in case some of the matters discussed in that report have not been brought to the notice of members generally, I intend later to quote from a booklet entitled *Future Town Planning Administration in South Australia* that was published by the Adelaide Division of the Australian Planning Institute in 1962.

I acknowledge that the committee brought down a very valuable report and that its maps concerning freeways and such matters have merit and deserve high praise. Regarding some of the detailed recommendations, however, this does not necessarily mean that I am favourably disposed towards all of them, but this motion, in asking that the Government consider the report as an interim development plan and provide for the lodging and consideration of objections and the co-ordination of the work of local governing bodies to give effect to the plan as revised from time to time, is of paramount importance to this State. The report was tabled on October 24 last. Section 27 (2) of the Town Planning Act, 1929-1957, states:

Either House of Parliament may, by resolution notice of which has been given at any time within 28 sitting days of that House after the plan was laid before it, refer the plan back to the committee for reconsideration either generally or as regards any matter referred to in the resolution. The committee shall thereupon reconsider the plan and make such alterations thereto as the committee deems requisite and shall make a further report upon the plan as so altered.

The period of 28 sitting days has practically expired, but I believe it is not desirable to refer back the plan to the committee because it would not serve any good purpose. In fact, I believe it would result only in delaying the implementation of the recommendations and would cost heavy additional future expenditure to the people of this State as a whole.

It is no use having a competent Town Planner and committee producing a plan and numerous recommendations unless we do something constructive about them. As I have already said, the plan cost the State a considerable sum of money and we should attempt to obtain the best benefit for the community from the plan and ensure that it is not shelved, as has happened with so many other plans and recommendations in the past. I believe all members will appreciate that, in a developing State such as ours, any delay at all will cost colossal expenditure in the eventual implementation of the recommendations. For example, there is some development contrary to the plan now, particularly north and south of the metropolitan area as defined in the Town Planning Act, which includes Salisbury. Acceptance as an interim development plan is essential to cater for this and it could be subject to revision from time to time.

A long period of time is envisaged by some of the recommendations of the committee. For example, some of the recommendations relate to matters that require immediate attention

whilst others relate to 30 years hence. Now is the time to act in order to avoid the expenditure of millions of pounds more than would otherwise be necessary. Conditions are changing all the time and the present recommendations should be acted upon now, but they should be subject to review, say, every five years. In this way, the present plan could be looked at as a first step that could be followed by a more advanced step at a later stage but, for goodness sake, let us implement the recommendations as the town planning experts see the position at the present time. There are several weaknesses in the Town Planning Act in its present form, and one in particular is that it deals primarily with the control of subdivisions of land, but the power to regulate the use of the land, which is essential for the implementation of effective town planning legislation, is not catered for. If land is situated in the metropolitan area as defined in the Town Planning Act, the Engineer-in-Chief may certify that the land cannot be economically sewered and provided with a reticulated water supply. Thus, approval for a subdivision may be withheld unless the Minister specially consents, and this is the only control that can guide the development of the metropolitan area on an overall basis. However, the bulk of the subdivision at the present time is just to the north and south of the metropolitan area as defined in the Act, and thus there is no effective control of the subdivision that is taking place.

Before anyone can undertake building construction, it is necessary to approach the local authority for a building permit. It should be a simple matter for the local authority to refer to the overall detailed plan to see whether the permit sought fits in with the recommended plan of development. At present, the Town Planner may withhold approval of a subdivision of land for specific reasons but, once the subdivision has been approved, the Town Planner has no say for what purpose the land should be used. One method of overcoming this problem is to have model regulations that could be followed up by zoning regulations, but all this takes time and I have been given to understand that it could take up to three years.

In Perth, the system of interim control was used with its town planning development in respect to major parts of the plan. As regards Adelaide it could apply, for example, to the preservation of the hills face, the rural area, and the protection of major roads. The preservation of industrial areas and major open spaces was contained in the interim order in Perth, which has been in force for seven

years since the plan was launched, and only now the final plan is being submitted. We should use the same method here because, there being interim control, it would give one the room one needs while all the differences are being resolved. Another matter causing me concern is that investigation of redevelopment was not done by the Town Planning Committee. Members must admit that this is already a problem and it is just as essential that redevelopment does not take place haphazardly: redevelopment as well as new development must be done in conjunction with the overall plan.

As I stated in my opening remarks, I have here a brochure published by the Adelaide Division of the Australian Planning Institute entitled *Future Town Planning Administration in South Australia*. In the foreword it states:

South Australia has town planning legislation in name only, and metropolitan Adelaide is the only capital in Australia without proper town planning control. Whilst this state of affairs may be deplored by many, it does mean that when effective planning control is finally introduced into the State it will be possible to profit from the experience of other States and countries in the search for the ideal system of planning administration.

I agree with these comments and they are something about which we should not feel proud because once again we are lagging behind the other States as regards progressive and essential reform for our legislation and administration. In the last page of this brochure are contained three major recommendations which I strongly endorse, namely:

1. On submission to Parliament of the advisory development plan for metropolitan Adelaide prepared by the Town Planning Committee, Parliament should immediately amend the Town Planning Act to empower the making of an interim development order.

I understand that by "metropolitan Adelaide" the institute means that area between Gawler and Sellick Beach and as far east as Tea Tree Gully. This area would take in places such as Clarendon. The brochure continues:

2. The interim development order should be made as soon as possible for the area covered by the advisory development plan for metropolitan Adelaide and should require permission to be obtained from the Town Planning Committee for certain classes of development.

3. A major amendment to the Town Planning Act should be passed providing for:

- (1) The setting up of a metropolitan planning authority with power to:
 - i. prepare and review overall and detailed planning schemes for metropolitan Adelaide;
 - ii. to control development of metropolitan significance;

- iii. to acquire and dispose of land;
- iv. to control a fund to be used for planning purposes;
- v. to exercise interim control;
- (2) Local councils within metropolitan Adelaide to exercise control of development within their areas;
- (3) Councils outside the metropolitan area, either individually or jointly, to prepare planning schemes and control development within their areas;
- (4) The setting up of regional planning authorities as necessary outside metropolitan Adelaide;
- (5) The Attorney-General to be the Minister responsible for approving planning schemes;
- (6) The setting up of a town planning appeals committee;
- (7) Such general matters as the content of planning schemes, the procedure to be followed for obtaining approval, the holding of inquiries, the making of applications for planning permission and other administrative matters.

As I said earlier, legislation has been introduced in Western Australia to provide for interim planning and I am informed that such legislation is working most satisfactorily in Perth where land is being subdivided and additional road transport services provided. In Western Australia objections to a plan may be lodged within three months of its being presented to Parliament and I understand that this provision works reasonably well so far as new development is concerned.

It is often said that more green belts are required in metropolitan Adelaide and, under the development plan presented by the Town Planning Committee, a section of land near the top of Tapley Hill is recommended to be reserved as a green belt. I am informed that there is a lift of 250ft. from the Happy Valley reservoir to the highest point in this area and that it will be possible to supply water to a stretch of country from a point as high as O'Halloran Hill through to Seacombe Road. If water were supplied, this land would lend itself admirably for reservation as a green belt because it has been excellent primary-producing land.

People purchasing houses, including Housing Trust houses, in new areas pay for the cost of new roads at about £3 a foot, and this charge is loaded on to the cost of the house that must be repaid over a term of 20 or 30 years. Because this cost must be paid initially by the subdivider and not by the local council, under the Local Government Act the local council can then come in and impose a further charge of up to 10s. a foot in respect of kerbing and

water table constructed. This a matter of grave concern. Today it could be 8s. to 8s. 6d. a foot for kerbing and water table. Some councils do not charge 10s. a foot, although the regulation is there. It is a positive hardship on people who are trying to purchase houses in new areas and have already paid the road cost in the original payment. It is possible that a further charge of 1s. 6d. a foot for sealed footpaths or 1s. a foot if unsealed will be made.

Much of what is contained in the Town Planning Committee's report has merit, but I would not agree with everything in it. This report should not be the complete authority to zone the metropolitan area, because local government authorities should be responsible for zoning timber frame houses and heavy industries. This report suggests that in the Edwards-town district a territory should be zoned so that a workshop would be split in two. I cannot agree with that. I believe that common sense should prevail in many of these things, but on the major issues of the report it should be the opinion of this House that it should be an interim development plan, and that provision should be made for the lodging and consideration of objections and the co-ordination of the work of councils to give effect to the plan as revised from time to time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD secured the adjournment of the debate.

ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 2. Page 923.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The purpose of this Bill is clear with no ambiguity on what the Leader desires. At present polling booths on election day close at 8 p.m., but the amendment is to ensure that the polls close at 6 p.m. No problem exists about its legal intention, its drafting or similar matters. Parliament has to decide whether it will retain the present hours or shorten them by two hours. Several points should be considered by honourable members. The hour of 8 p.m. was fixed, I believe, some time ago. At one time the hour was 7 p.m., and this was altered to 8 p.m. because of lack of uniformity with the Commonwealth Electoral Act. I believe the amendment to achieve that was moved by an honourable member on the other side because of the confusion that arose between State and Commonwealth elections, when many electors claimed they were

being debarred from voting or lost their right to vote because they did not know that State election hours did not coincide with Commonwealth election hours.

Mr. Clark: That was done a long time ago.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes. I have not checked this, but I believe the hour of 7 p.m. was extended to coincide with the Commonwealth hours. It is confusing to electors to have different polling hours for different types of elections. It would be unwise to change the hour to 6 p.m., first because of the 8 p.m. Commonwealth hour; and secondly, electors are accustomed to 8 p.m. closing for State elections. There is a strong case for uniformity. If the Commonwealth Government altered its polling hours I would introduce legislation to bring our hours into line with them because uniform hours would be an advantage. Another important matter to be considered is the convenience of voters. It is easy to say that they can get to the poll by six o'clock, but, notwithstanding what the Leader said, many voters cast their votes almost at closing time.

Mr. Ryan: That has altered in recent years.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: We should be interested in the convenience of the customer. On occasions congestion has occurred at polling booths at closing time. To say that people could easily get to the polling booth by six o'clock is one thing; to say it is more convenient for them to get there before six o'clock is another. I believe that many people use the hours between 6 and 8 p.m. because it is the most convenient time for them.

The Leader suggests that it is desirable that the trend of an election should be known as early as possible, but I do not think that proposal has much merit because, irrespective of when a poll closes, if it is a close-fought election it is several days before postal and absent votes are returned and counted, and still longer before a distribution of preferences can take place. This is not a matter of great political concern, but a question of whether the convenience of polling officers and the curiosity of members of Parliament should take precedence of the convenience of electors. At election time I always stand up for and am with the electors. I advise the House not to accept the proposed alteration. I oppose the Bill.

Mr. JENNINGS secured the adjournment of the debate.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT
BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from September 4. Page 851.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): This Bill provides for the installation of safety belts in motor cars in the interests of public safety after a specified date. I do not think it can be denied that safety belts can prevent serious and even fatal accidents. Reputable evidence is that safety belts tend to lessen the impact of accidents and provide for less severe injury on many occasions. Undoubtedly, they have frequently prevented the loss of life. I do not think there is any argument that a strong case can be presented for the desirability of having safety belts fitted in motor vehicles. However, the weakness of this Bill is that it does not compel people to wear safety belts. I have had experience overseas and locally of cars that have been fitted with safety belts, but I have found that their presence does not necessarily mean that they are used.

Mr. McKee: It would be difficult for tradesmen, including bakers, to wear safety belts.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If the proposed legislation is to be effective it will be necessary to compel people to wear safety belts, but I do not believe that that is practicable. Safety belts are provided in aeroplanes, and illuminated notices request passengers to fit them prior to take off and landing—and in those operations the wearing of a safety belt is more important than it is in a motor car—yet hostesses frequently have to ask passengers to fasten their belts.

Mr. Bywaters: They only want to talk to the hostess!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That may be the attitude of people from Murray Bridge, but that is not the normal reason. Frequently passengers are not conscious of the need to wear safety belts. I believe that this Bill either goes too far or it does not go far enough.

Mr. Millhouse: Don't you think it is a matter of educating the public?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes. However, this Bill does not propose education but compulsion—compulsion to fit safety belts, not to wear them. The honourable member would agree that any attempt to compel the wearing of seat belts would destroy his intentions. I believe that while he is ambitious for belts to be installed and worn, he would

not want it to be compulsory for them to be worn. I believe that in some parts of the world it is compulsory to wear safety belts.

Mr. Millhouse: In 19 of the American States.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That is not a majority. I agree that 19 would be a majority of Australian States.

Mr. Ryan: Nineteen is not a majority in this State!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes it is. In the circumstances I believe that the compulsory introduction of belts into motor cars is probably somewhat premature. I ask the honourable member to consider amending the Bill. I do not know whether or not he is interested, but he might consider including a clause to say that the legislation shall come into operation on proclamation and not necessarily on a specific date. That would enable a proclamation to be made without subsequent reference to Parliament when it was found that public opinion was sufficient to have the proposal accepted. If such a provision were included in the Bill on the understanding that it would not mean an automatic proclamation when the Governor assented to the measure, I would be prepared to support it. Today I would not support the compulsory wearing of the belt because it would lead only to a widespread disregard of the law: the matter could not be adequately policed. If the honourable member acts on my suggestion I shall be prepared to support the Bill.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside): This is an interesting Bill and I feel that the member for Mitcham should be commended for introducing it in the interests of the public as far as road safety is concerned. Since the Bill was introduced I have noticed that the number of motor cars that have been fitted with seat belts has increased considerably. I feel that if the Bill does nothing more than bring to the attention of the public the idea of having safety belts, with the ultimate idea of educating the public to an acceptance of them as a safety device, it will have served a good purpose indeed. We are all conversant with the fact that in the last few weeks a number of publications have been circulated in this House giving instances of the research that has been made overseas in the matter of safety belts. I feel that we should accept this, because I cannot see any necessity for doing the research work all over again in Australia, when an exhaustive research has been undertaken in America, the United Kingdom and Scandinavian countries. I think

that anything that will serve to reduce the tragic road toll is a step in the right direction. Anything that might contribute to the prevention of road fatalities and accidents should be investigated. The thought occurs to me that this is a matter that can be ventilated best in Parliament.

We read of the number of fatalities that occur each weekend, and unfortunately they are increasing week by week. I cannot help wondering how many of them could have been avoided by the use of safety belts. As has been said here, in the United States of America 19 States have introduced legislation for the installation of seat belts. That is an indication of the thinking of road and motor car authorities, and indicates the pressure they have been able to exert for the legislation to be introduced.

We are aware of the many new motor cars coming on to the market at present. A number of them have been fitted with in-built anchorages for the installation of safety belts. This indicates the trend of thinking about the future use of this safety device. I understand that in England the Rolls Royce Motor Company is actually selling cars with the safety belts installed. Undoubtedly the cost is included in the sales price of the vehicle, but naturally it is in the nature of an extra charge. One of the important things which I think this Bill will do is to educate the public so that they will accept safety belts as a good idea. Nobody likes compulsion, and I concede the point that it is of little use insisting on safety belts being placed in motor cars unless they are used by the people travelling in those vehicles.

If nothing else is done, the introduction of the Bill and the subject having been debated here will make people think a little more about this matter. I have read, as no doubt other members have read, that the Snowy Mountains Authority has insisted on the installation of safety belts in all its vehicles and, furthermore, has insisted on its employees using them. I was told only a few weeks ago that some of the motor car companies in Adelaide have had seat belts placed in their cars and insisted on their staff using them, and that if it is not done strong disciplinary measures are taken against them. I suppose there are some accidents where the use of a safety belt may lead to a fatality. We must look at the matter from both sides. For instance, in a rolling accident a person would be more likely to die as a result of the accident if a safety belt were used than if thrown out when the

vehicle somersaulted. However, the incidence of this type of accident is small compared with the number of accidents caused as a result of collisions, excessive speed or perhaps a lack of road courtesy. I think that many of the accidents on our roads are caused by a lack of courtesy being given by one driver to another.

I commend the member for Mitcham and suggest that he take heart from two facts. The first is that not so many years ago windscreen wipers operated manually were looked upon as a gadget invented in order to make money, and the driver could use them if he wished to do so. Now the windscreen wiper is a compulsory part of a motor car. Again, it is only a matter of five or six years since in South Australia flashing indicator lights were used in the newer models of cars. Legislation passed in this Chamber makes it a compulsory part of car manufacture. I suggest that this Bill will educate the public to an acceptance of safety belts in cars, and instead of their being what we may regard as a gadget they will become an integral part of the safety appliances used in motor cars.

Amongst the mass of literature I have read on this matter in recent weeks is an article in the August number of the *Report*, which is the official journal of the Australian Road Safety Council. I mention this as a matter of interest because this is perhaps one way in which groups in the community can gather information about this subject, which is becoming of great interest to all members of the public. We are all concerned with the prevention of road accidents. This report dealt with the part women can play in road safety measures. It stated that the American road safety authorities, as part of a concerted plan to try to reduce road fatalities, have sought the help of women's organizations in a crusade against road accidents. It went on to say that the huge increased demand for safety belts in America has been partly credited to the influence of women, as a result of the approach made by road safety authorities to women's organizations in America. The report stresses the fact that America's low death rate from road accidents compared with other countries is partly the result of the myriad activities of women's organizations. Therefore, as a result of the debating of this Bill here and the public interest which it has stirred up, perhaps some of our women's organizations that have forums on subjects of public interest will initiate further discussions and research of their own

on the question of whether safety belts should or should not be installed in motor cars.

With those few remarks, I again commend the member for Mitcham for introducing the Bill. I think the Premier's suggestion that this measure should become operative by proclamation is perhaps a good one. Even if the Bill is not passed this session, I do not think it will be more than a couple of years before we shall accept safety belts as a most necessary and compulsory adjunct to cars.

Mr. Millhouse: The Bill would not be effective for another 15 months.

Mrs. STEELE: It would not come into effect before the end of 1964 in any event. I support the Bill as a medium for creating public interest, and I hope that in due course it will become law.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I was told beforehand that I was to follow the Premier in the debate, but I was a little slow in releasing my safety belt and the member for Burnside got to her feet before I could. I support the Bill and, although I will not be quite so elaborate as the last speaker in my commendation, I think it is warranted and that it is time we started thinking about this important matter. I consider that safety belts are desirable, and I have not heard any opinion to the contrary; everyone agrees that they will save lives. In fact, the Premier this afternoon said that he was in favour of the Bill in principle; the only thing he requested was that it should not operate in 1964, as the member for Mitcham suggested, but that it should be subject to proclamation. This course may have something to commend it, but I am a little suspicious in this regard because I recall a previous occasion when an amending Bill was passed in this House to provide for the school leaving age to be raised to 15 years. That amendment was to operate on proclamation, but it was many years before it finally was proclaimed. If the member for Mitcham accepts the Premier's suggested amendment, I trust he will obtain some assurance that this will not be a case where we may wait indefinitely for this important legislation to operate.

The Senate Select Committee on road safety has been referred to in this debate. I have been prepared to speak on this Bill, I think for the last six weeks and certainly prior to the Stirling by-election, but the debate has been delayed for such a long time that I think the recommendations of that select committee bear repeating. Paragraphs 158 and 159 of the report state:

Present statistics from overseas research projects establish to reasonable satisfaction the beneficial effects of safety belts in vehicles, for example. Exhaustive tests have been carried out of varying types, and the work has been extended to Australia to the extent that the Standards Association of Australia has drawn up specifications for approved belts and harness assemblies. The most thorough research on seat belts has been carried out by the Cornell University Automotive Crash Injury Research Group. The results of their inquiries showed that there was an overall improvement in the frequency of injury (of all degrees of severity) of 60 per cent reduction. Complete answers were found to the common criticisms of safety belts, and the results were sufficient to satisfy a Congressional Committee that safety belts, properly manufactured and installed, are a valuable safety device.

I believe every honourable member in this House is concerned with the number of road accidents that occur not only in this State but throughout Australia. We are told that the number is rising rapidly year by year, and I have some figures which bear that out. Road accidents today are causing a terrific toll of life and limb, and that is why this select committee on road safety was set up in 1960 to investigate the causes of accidents and to suggest appropriate measures to be taken. That committee has brought down a recommendation in its report which I consider should be acted upon by the States and the Commonwealth. As this committee has recommended the use of safety belts, this is an opportune time to support a Bill such as this.

People who oppose this measure have said that it would add to motorists' costs, but I think this criticism is answered by the fact that the Bill will not operate until after December 31, 1964, and that it will apply only to new registrations. I submit that it will impose no financial hardship on people, because only an infinitesimal amount of money will be added to what is now a large amount in buying a car. A new motor car involves an average expense of more than £1,000, and the lap type belts which I have installed in my own car cost only £10 10s. The multiple or combination belts cost £12 15s. This cost would be greatly reduced if the anchorages were mass produced and installed in cars as they were going along the assembly line. At present, it is necessary to take the car to a workshop to be fitted, and the person doing the job has to get out the necessary equipment to do the work. As time goes on, new innovations that will become available when safety belts and other things are added to cars will reduce the cost to even less than it is now. There will be no

financial hardship on any motorist if seat belts are installed.

Another argument advanced was that people could not be compelled to wear belts, which the Premier suggested it might be necessary to do. However, other safety measures have been installed in cars that people have not been compelled to use, yet they have used them in the interests of their own safety. The most striking example is the foot brake; it is there, but the motorist is not compelled to use it.

Mr. Millhouse: That is a good example.

Mr. BYWATERS: A motorist can run into something if he desires, but he applies the brake when an emergency occurs. I installed safety belts in my car with some reservations; I did so as an example more than for anything else. I had at that time read the Senate Select Committee's report that indicated that motorists should install them. Now I do not feel completely dressed when in a car if I do not have a seat belt on, and I think that applies to everyone who has them. I have heard it said that they are uncomfortable, but that is not so; I think they make one feel comfortable. When driving around bends in the hills, motorists, and particularly passengers (who have nothing to hold on to), are held in their seats effectively.

Mr. Heaslip: This Bill does not provide for safety belts in back seats.

Mr. BYWATERS: I am talking about front seat passengers, those with whom I am mainly concerned: my wife travels frequently with me in the front seat, and she is my most precious possession. Once one is used to having a safety belt, one feels not properly dressed in a car without one. Safety belts will become so natural to people that they will come to be regarded in the same way as foot brakes; they will be used for protection. This afternoon the member for Burnside (Mrs. Steele) said that safety belts were installed in every vehicle operated by the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority. I was told recently by a representative of that authority that the accident rate in its vehicles had been halved since the advent of safety belts.

Mr. Shannon: No; the injury rate has been cut.

Mr. BYWATERS: I am sorry; that is so. This authority is conscious of all safety measures, as members will see when they visit the project next year. It is incumbent on passengers as well as on the employees to wear belts. They are installed in both front and

back seats and the drivers insist that they be put on when one enters any car. I did not have to be told, as it was natural for me to put the belt on. The employees are so emphatic about the desirability of using seat belts that if one of them could speak in this House he would be able to convince members of their great advantage.

Mr. Freebairn: I believe there is a responsibility on drivers to see that they are used.

Mr. BYWATERS: That is what a driver told me. He said that every employee who had a passenger must make sure that the passenger's seat belt was properly adjusted. Statistics of road accidents were published in the Senate Select Committee's report and in last year's Road Safety Council's report. It has been estimated that in 1958 road accidents cost about £69,000,000, and the figure has increased considerably since then. This sum is made up of £46,074,000 in material damage, £21,017,000 in loss of manpower and earnings, and £2,334,850 for the cost of treatment. This is a staggering sum which this country can ill afford to lose. If by some means this could be cut by even a small percentage, the means would certainly be warranted. In 1962 a total of 2,135,000 working days was lost through road accidents—almost three times the amount of time lost by industrial disputes. Every time an industrial dispute takes place the newspapers headline the amount of time lost and the cost to employees, employers, and the country as a whole, yet we hear little about the cost of road accidents in relation to lost working time. This is an important side of the matter, and we must endeavour at all times to reduce this loss.

We know that Australia's population will reach 11,000,000 this year, which is almost double the population at the end of the war. It is expected that by 1990 it will have doubled again, or perhaps be in excess of that figure. This increase in population will increase the accident potential. We must try to reduce the number of accidents, particularly those resulting in loss of life or limb. There are now 4,000,000 licensed drivers in Australia, and 535,000 miles of roads. More roads will be built and traffic will increase as time passes. If we have to rely on education to get seat belts installed, many people will refrain from having them because of apathy. I think that, once people install belts, they will feel it incumbent on them to use them, and that they will not feel comfortable without them, but it will take a long time to educate the people.

I support the Bill, and hope that it will be carried. If the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) agrees with the Premier's suggestion that it should come into operation by proclamation rather than at a specified time, I hope he will obtain an assurance from the Premier that its operation will be not unduly delayed.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): I was pleased to hear the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) give his blessing to this measure. I think he is well aware of the problem faced by motorists coming from his district through my district to Adelaide. These people travel over one of the most treacherous pieces of highway in this State, and seat belts would have a material effect in reducing injury, and even death in many cases. No matter how careful a motorist may be in the hills, there are occasions when some cranky loon comes around a blind corner on the wrong side of the road and crashes into him. Whatever one does in those circumstances, one has no say in the matter at all. Unfortunately there is that type of driver who uses our highways like that. On roads such as the one that the honourable member who has just spoken and I myself use frequently, the conditions provide ample scope for the careless driver to cause trouble.

I have a little different approach to this question of the compulsory use of seat belts. I do not think there is any need to apply compulsion to their use. I agree with the member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) that the fact that one has seat belts fitted and that they have cost £8 or £10 to fit will of itself be sufficient guarantee that at least one will not allow them to perish hanging by the anchor without being used at all. I do not think for a moment that that will happen. I have seat belts in my own car and, no matter how far I am driving, whether it be five miles or five yards, when I get into the front seat I fasten the belt automatically.

There is a psychological effect of a seat belt having been fitted. When one gets into a car, the belt is a reminder that one is in a vehicle that can cause very serious injury without one's action contributing to it. At any moment on the roads something that a driver knows nothing about can pop around the corner or another driver can do a wrong thing in traffic and cause serious damage to the car of the innocent driver without his having done anything to contribute to it. Thus, the fitting of a seat belt has a psychological effect on the driver.

The cost of safety belts is something that their opponents try to make something of. I heard the member for Murray say that it cost him between £10 and £12. My seat belts were fitted for under £8. They are a popular type of seat belt. I certainly bought them wholesale, as I think any honourable member who uses a little gumption can do. I had my seat belts fitted by my own mechanic. It is a simple matter. If I were a mechanic I would have fitted them myself.

Mr. Bywaters: One needs only to drill a few holes and fix some bolts.

Mr. SHANNON: One needs to drill only four or five holes. There is a shoulder strap and four bolts have to be secured. That is how hard it is to fit them. It is simplicity itself. I happen to be concerned in industrial insurance in the city. One of the major factors in the cost of motor insurance is personal injuries. Most of the cost in motor insurance can be laid at the door of personal injury. One of the biggest items to be faced, of course, is where a man is crippled—not killed. If he is killed, there is a known factor of what a company is up for but, if a motorist is partially crippled, he may be a continuing charge on an insurance company for an indefinite period involving the payment of many thousands of pounds for just that one injury. I am of the opinion that insurance companies, if the fitting of seat belts becomes law, will find that, contrary to what has happened in the past, third-party insurance will no longer be a serious charge upon insurance and we shall get reduced rates. Competition for comprehensive insurance will again reduce the premium rates if it is proven, as I believe it is sure to be proven, that personal injury will be reduced as a result of the use of seat belts.

Those factors can more than offset the initial cost of installing the belts. Over the years, the premium figure once it is reduced will continue reduced indefinitely. The premiums carry on every year but one does not fix seat belts to a car every year. Once they are installed, they will probably last a lifetime. A driver who has fitted belts will probably over a short period of years recoup the total cost once the insurance world realizes that we have taken steps to assist them to reduce their premium rates. As all honourable members know, at the moment third-party insurance rates are always a source of complaint by certain companies, who say that there is no profit in them. In fact, some States that are running their own State insurance are making heavy losses in

this field. Whilst that set of conditions prevails, obviously we are not likely to get any redress in premiums: on the contrary, there is more likely to be an increase in premium rates. My own feeling is that the honourable member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) has given this matter sufficient thought to go as far as I think he should go, as a first step. I do not think he should go further than he is going in relation to seat belts. They are a "must" under this Bill. Whether the honourable member agrees with the Premier's suggestion of introducing it by proclamation I am not concerned about, because I do not think for a moment that any responsible Government will fail to introduce the measure at the appropriate time and in consultation with the manufacturers of motor cars. The time will come when we shall buy through the distributors standard cars with safety belts already fitted.

Mr. Millhouse: In fact, several of the biggest manufacturers in America have announced that their 1964 models will have seat belts as standard fittings.

Mr. SHANNON: Yes; I am not surprised. Competition in the motor car world will bring that about. In the meantime, I see no harm in letting the world know that we are in the forefront in this matter of road security. I do not say that seat belts will stop even one accident. There is no such thing as protecting a fool from his folly and preventing him from doing things on the road that create a set of circumstances from which accidents result. I know we cannot legislate against that. I know of no form of legislation to cover that, but this does at least give those people with enough common sense to take precautions for their own safety a chance to cut down largely on personal injury and virtually to cut out fatal accidents. This factor has been carefully examined by the medical profession over a period of years, and it has come to the conclusion that, where seat belts are used, in road accidents death rarely occurs. Injury may occur. I am not suggesting that we shall not get hurt because we have a seat belt on. It depends on the seriousness of the accident and the force of impact of the vehicles. Fatalities are perhaps not eliminated absolutely but they are reduced to a point where they are negligible if safety belts are used.

I do not think that is a matter that can be lightly turned aside. The saving of life is important, particularly as most accidents result from some of the younger members of our society through sheer exuberance getting into a motor car that they

have possessed for only a short time and unfortunately doing things with the car that it is not designed to do. If they had seat belts fitted, they would not be killed and would learn their lesson. If a dog is run over and is not killed the first time, it rarely gets run over again. That applies also to people who get out of their first bad accident without loss of life. I do not want to see this Bill emasculated in any way. I should not like to see it defeated by over-kindness. I hope it will be left as it is at present drafted. I am 100 per cent in support of the Bill as it has been drafted because I think it goes far enough to commence this safety programme and I am firmly convinced that once it has started it will receive public support. Most of my friends who have installed seat belts admit frankly that they do not know why they did not do so when the belts first became available. I think there is an awareness in the community now of the value of such belts. I shall not weary the House with any statistics because they are not required. The fact is that we are legislating in a way that will not be costly to the individual because some of the costs will be returned to him by reduced insurance premiums over the years. We are giving the individual an important lead.

The company with which I have the honour to be associated installs seat belts in all its motor cars. We cannot compel our employees to use a belt but I rarely see an employee in a car without his using the seat belt. I consider that compulsion is not vital in this regard. I support the Bill and I hope that those who are critical of it will appreciate that Parliament is not trying to do something that will impose a cost on the community: it is not trying to fatten up the makers of safety belts and give them a handsome business. After all, somebody has to make safety belts; there is fair competition in this field today and there are three or four types at fairly competitive prices. We are not establishing a monopoly for somebody. In any case if this legislation creates business for outside people I suggest that that applies to most legislation: it has some effect on some people in every aspect of industry. I support the Bill.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): I commend the honourable member for Mitcham for having introduced this Bill. Since its introduction many more motorists have worn seat belts. It may be coincidental, but I think there has

been an awakening of a desirability to have safety belts installed in motor cars. Every person must be concerned with the holocaust on the roads. Although the devices themselves are of less avail than the human factor I think that road courtesy is basic to safety on the roads but if we can, through a campaign of education, instil in the minds of drivers the dire need to observe the courtesies of the road by driving at reasonable speeds, bearing in mind the condition of the terrain, the traffic density and expectation of traffic coming on to a given road at a certain time, and by having a greater awareness of the dangers to each person on the road, then I believe we have the basic foundation of more careful driving. The care engendered in the behaviour of motorists will automatically tend to have those who at present scorn the idea of seat belts accept them as something in keeping with the general approaches to safety on the roads. I do not believe in compelling motorists to wear the belts: that would not appeal to me because it would be practically impossible to police the wearing of belts. The education of the motorist is basic to the use of belts to ensure overall greater safety on the roads.

Mr. Shannon: It could be discovered that the driver had not been wearing the belt only after he had been hurt in a road accident and that would be too late.

Mr. LAUCKE: That is probably true. When it comes to discussion as to what constitutes the best type of belt I think that the belt that gives the driver the least difficulty of entry or fitting is of great importance. I fitted in my car, three years ago, belts that were completely embracing, as it were, over the shoulders and across the waist but they are so difficult of entry that I have not used them recently. However, I would use the sash type of belt if it were installed in my car. I again commend the member for Mitcham for introducing the Bill. I do not desire to seek a provision in the Bill regarding compulsion to wear safety belts because I would leave that to the individual. I should not like to compel the installation of safety belts in a car before members of the public generally were conditioned to receive them.

With that in mind I am inclined to the Premier's proposal that there be provision for the placing of seat belts in cars at a time when it is considered that the public generally will accept them happily and spontaneously and will wear them. Basically, I consider that there is a place in the scheme of things and

in the interests of safety for the installation and the wearing of safety belts.

Mr. Millhouse: In fact 67 per cent of people interviewed advocated the wearing of them—over two-thirds.

Mr. LAUCKE: Yes, but whilst people say they are in favour to the extent to which the honourable member referred, only about 23 per cent actually use them, so in my opinion the educational programme has not advanced to a point where there is acceptance by those who say that drivers should wear them but who do not themselves wear them.

Mr. Millhouse: Where did you get the figure of 23 per cent?

Mr. LAUCKE: I read it recently in the results of a gallup poll. I support the Bill at this stage.

Mr. LAWN secured the adjournment of the debate.

WEST TORRENS BY-LAW: ZONING.

Order of the Day No. 5: Mr. Millhouse to move:

That by-law No. 19 of the Corporation of the City of West Torrens in respect of zoning, made on July 10, 1962, and laid on the table of this House on June 12, 1963, be disallowed.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): As the subject matter of this Order of the Day was the subject of a report to the House earlier this afternoon, I move that this Order of the Day be now read and discharged.

Order of the Day read and discharged.

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 2. Page 932.)

Clause 8—“Attachment of earnings.”

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): When the Committee was considering this clause last week I said I believed it might be faulty and promised members that I would have an investigation made and obtain further information. First, I will inform the Committee of the procedure for the provision of relief to deserted wives. I have a report from the Chairman of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board, as follows:

1. When a deserted wife who is destitute applies to the department she receives two types of assistance—

- (a) immediate cash relief;
- (b) help in recovering maintenance from her husband.

2. The applicant is interviewed by relief officers on the day of application and it is normally possible to issue relief immediately. Detailed inquiries into the circumstances are made subsequently.

3. Provided the inquiries are satisfactory the department continues to issue relief whilst there is need. After about six months the deserted wife may receive a widow's pension from the Commonwealth. The Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department's relief is then reduced in amount but most cases continue to receive some relief in addition to the Commonwealth pension.

4. It is also possible that the deserted wife may obtain some maintenance from her husband. The amount may not be great and payments may not be frequent. If maintenance payments over a period are less than the amount the department would have paid as relief the department makes up the difference to the deserted wife. If the husband subsequently pays in higher amounts of maintenance this sometimes results in the department withholding a portion of maintenance received over a limited period to offset portion of the full relief paid when no maintenance was available. Over the whole period the deserted wife does not receive less than the normal amount of relief, neither does she receive both relief and maintenance for the same period.

5. The following procedure is used to help the deserted wife recover maintenance:

- (a) On the date she applies for (and receives) relief an appointment is made for her to be interviewed by one of the maintenance recovery officers. Interviews can usually be arranged in about two or three weeks or sooner in special cases.
- (b) At the interview full information is obtained about the matrimonial difficulties, etc.
- (c) A letter is then sent to the deserting husband (if his address is known) asking him to make arrangements to pay regular maintenance. Some husbands arrange maintenance (or even a reconciliation); others claim reasons why they should not pay maintenance to their wives; others simply do not reply.
- (d) If no reply is received or if the reply is unsatisfactory or if the husband fails to honour his promises the case will be reviewed in consultation with the deserted wife to determine what legal action shall be taken for maintenance recovery.
- (e) If the wife intends to seek subsistence maintenance only the matter can usually be handled reasonably quickly by a court, provided the husband's address is available for service of documents. If she wishes to seek greater maintenance and/or separation and custody orders the court arrangements may take longer.
- (f) If the husband's address is unknown there may be considerable delay in bringing the matter to a court hearing. The department has the co-operation of the police in all States but in many cases also needs help from the wife to discover the husband's address.
- (g) Once a court order for maintenance has been made enforcement proceedings can be taken if the husband defaults. However, many husbands are difficult to find.

(h) The department has many cases where husbands evade their responsibilities to their wives and children for lengthy periods. Not infrequently the men associate with other women and father other children. Their resources may then be inadequate to maintain all those dependent upon them.

That report sets out the usual procedure taken by the department in connection with maintenance orders obtained. Concerning assistance, as soon as a case is reported to the officers of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Board the board provides for increased relief or for relief immediately in cases where there is no sustenance. Further, the board does its utmost to further the cause of the deserted wife. Usually, court action is not taken immediately because frequently cases occur where, if a little time is allowed to elapse, reconciliation is effected. Often a minor argument may have led to a temporary break between the parties and this is sometimes resolved: for this reason the department does not take action immediately because its experience has shown it is not advisable to do so. Last week I was under the impression that the State Attorneys-General had not approved of any order being made as is provided for in new section 79a. If I gave that impression to the Committee it is incorrect because the draft amendments to the Maintenance Act framed by the Attorneys-General provide for a charge to be made on wages in certain cases. The uniform maintenance laws that have been drafted provide for action to be taken and I have a copy of these provisions. They are extremely complicated and deal with many matters which are not included in new section 79a. However, experience has shown that they should be incorporated. Further, the investigation the Crown Solicitor has made on my behalf shows that, as it is now drafted, new section 79a could not operate because certain legal impediments would stop it operating at present. I mention those things because I want to set the position right. If I gave that impression last week, it was then my belief, and I probably said that the Attorneys-General had not worked out a system of maintenance enforcement. That is wrong, because they have. It is not yet uniform law, but I have a copy of the proposals which, I understand, are in an advanced stage of drafting.

The Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department advises that under the Maintenance Act it is possible for a court to attach the assets of a husband in the hands of another person. However, it is not possible for a court to make an attachment order in respect of

future earnings. The proposed uniform Bill currently under consideration by Commonwealth and State Attorneys-General includes extensive provisions for attachment of earnings. The more important of these are—and I emphasize that these are fundamental to any successful operation of the scheme—as follows:

- (a) An attachment order is not to be made unless the husband has defaulted willfully or negligently;
- (b) An order must specify a minimum amount below which the man's own portion of his net wages must not fall—that is, to avoid a large deduction from the wages of a man temporarily on short time;
- (c) Any payment made by the employer is declared to be a valid discharge to him against the defendant.

Honourable members will see that that is most important, otherwise the employer would be obliged under the court order to pay not only the maintenance amount, but also compelled to pay the wages. Provision must be made for him to have a valid discharge. The departmental report also states:

- (d) The attachment order does not come into effect until seven days after it has been served on the employer. This is to avoid difficulties with the employers' wages preparations, etc. Similarly, the employer is safeguarded if he pays under the order within seven days after he is served with notice that the order is discharged.

Otherwise, you would find employers paying on orders that have been satisfied, and they would have no legal redress. The report continues:

- (e) Without special court direction an attachment order is not to be in operation at the same time as any other type of enforcement order;
- (f) Arrangements that are to be made when two or more attachment orders are issued on the same employer for the same employee are specified;
- (g) There is a provision for variation of discharge of the order on the application of any party;
- (h) A penalty is imposed on an employer who dismisses an employee because of the attachment order.

Other matters that might be considered in connection with attachment orders are:

- (a) whether an employer should be entitled to make a small charge to cover his expenses of each deduction;
- (b) whether in practice there would be much gain from this type of order. The man in stable employment tends to pay maintenance regularly. The poor payer is usually one who changes employment and residence frequently;

- (c) the effect of this proposed legislation on other practices. The Mercantile Law Act, 1936, provides that "no order shall be issued by any court, judge or justice for the attachment of the wages of any clerk, servant, labourer or workman."

The honourable member's amendment is in direct contradiction to legislation that has been previously passed by Parliament. It is not expressed in terms of "may" but in definite terms. In addition to that, the Commonwealth Government in the Navigation Act has specifically provided that there is to be no attachment of any seaman's wages.

The position is that if the honourable member's amendment was accepted it could not come into operation without considerable alteration in other laws, because other laws forbid it from coming into operation. The honourable member's provision would give the court power to do it, but other laws prevent that. The consensus of opinion of the Attorneys-General is that attachment orders are desirable, and would in certain instances achieve some benefit. I accept that, although I said last week that there could be some doubt in my mind.

Mr. Lawn: Did you say that the Attorneys' conference said that?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: A conference of Attorneys-General has accepted that attachment orders are desirable. It proceeded to draft provisions for such orders and they are now in an advanced stage; they have to provide for all supplementary conditions that may arise. For instance, if an order is made on an employer to pay a maintenance order to the Crown in respect of an employee's child, the employer must also be protected from having to pay wages for the same amount. Under this amendment he would be legally responsible for both. The employee must be protected from dismissal, otherwise when an attachment order is made the employer may say, "I am not going to worry about this. I will serve this chap notice." All supplementary matters have to be considered before a scheme can operate successfully. The Mercantile Law Act would have to be completely recast, because at present it expressly forbids any attachment order against a wage earner.

Mr. Lawn: Would not a later Act supersede the Mercantile Law Act?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: No, because the Leader's proposal does not make it obligatory for the court to make an order. The court has to use judgment. However, the Mercantile Law Act expressly forbids the

court's making an order. It is completely mandatory. The provision was designed to protect workers' wages from attachment orders.

Mr. Bywaters: Which could be applied by a hire-purchase company.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The object is to protect the wage earner from having an attachment order applied to his wages. Even with the best will in the world, we cannot alter a Commonwealth Act. At some future time we may amend the Mercantile Law Act, but we certainly cannot amend the Act relating to seamen. I have an opinion from the Crown Solicitor on this question of attachment of wages. It is available for any member to read, but I assure the Opposition that the position is as I have stated. The Leader's proposed amendment would conflict directly with operative Statute law, and if carried it would cause countless legal difficulties. A conference of State Attorneys-General is drafting clauses to make attachment orders operative.

Mr. Lawn: Are you suggesting that the only people who would benefit from this proposal at present would be lawyers?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Frankly, I think that the moment the Mercantile Law Act provision was quoted in court the magistrate would say, "I cannot act in the circumstances", and that is where the matter would end. If, however, a magistrate decided to act and said, "This is the last expression of Parliament's opinion" he would immediately encounter several legal problems. If an employer had an order served on him to pay a specified sum from a worker's wages to someone else, the employer would have to be protected against a claim from the worker. He would have to have a discharge order for the debt he has been ordered to pay. An employee would also have to be protected against dismissal.

Mr. Lawn: I don't know how you could do that.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is a complicated matter. I accept the idea of attaching wages for maintenance orders. However, in many instances such an order would not improve the position of the deserted wife. It would improve her position only if she was not receiving supplementary assistance from the Children's Welfare Department. In most instances an attachment order would be for less than the sum being provided by the Government at present. Frequently it would be for much less. In any event, the husband

has to be found before an attachment order can be made. The protective clauses that are being drafted by the Attorneys-General have reached an advanced stage and I will introduce them next session for members' consideration.

Mr. Lawn: Do they relate to attachment orders?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, with the necessary safeguards and provisions to make the scheme workable. A scheme will not work in many cases because when a husband does not want to pay he disappears, and we immediately start looking for him at Cloncurry or Woomera. Of course, an attachment order issued in South Australia would be ineffective in another State. Before it could be applied to earnings in another State we would need uniform legislation, which is the ultimate aim of the Attorneys-General. I suggest that the Leader does not proceed with this clause at present, as I do not think it can serve a useful purpose. Next year he can introduce a similar provision, and I will supply him with the necessary provisions drafted by the Attorneys-General, or I will introduce legislation, announcing that I am doing so in accordance with an arrangement made with members from both sides.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I know from experience that a deserted wife can receive financial assistance from the Children's Welfare Department. I also know that there is a six months' waiting period before the Commonwealth Government comes to the party. The deserted wife is obliged to prove that she has sought maintenance from her husband. I am more concerned with children who have no say in the matter. When a husband and wife have a dispute they have the opportunity to try to resolve their problems. We know that fathers of illegitimate children have left the State and done everything to dodge their responsibilities, and that is why the amendment was drafted. We think that it contains much merit. We also know that it is a problem to get agreement among solicitors, so how can we expect the Attorneys-General to agree to legislation to apply to all States? I can appreciate some of the existing difficulties. Today the Premier gave us much information on this subject and because we should have the opportunity to make ourselves conversant with it I suggest that progress be reported.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

THE BUDGET.

The Estimates—Grand total, £103,306,000.

In Committee of Supply.

(Continued from October 8. Page 979.)

THE LEGISLATURE.

Legislative Council, £13,900.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): I have pleasure in supporting the Budget. I am doubly pleased that the position on this side has been reinforced after our victory in the Stirling by-election. I welcome the new member for that district. I know from canvassing in the district that he is highly regarded and that was well demonstrated by the vote he received. He has been connected with public life long enough not to be misled by the mention by the member for Adelaide of the various aspects that he sees on this side of the House.

Mr. Clark: I think it was given as friendly advice.

Mr. HALL: Yes. I am sure there was nothing malicious in the remarks of the member for Adelaide.

Mr. Loveday: That would be characteristic.

Mr. HALL: Yes, but it was a good comedy turn, and it was not done without some thought. There is much camouflage amongst members on the Opposition benches, and the new member for Stirling will recognize that as he sits here giving his time and attention to the matters that come before Parliament. One of the greatest assets of the Opposition, and I say that they are good at it, is the camouflaging and hiding of their true policy. I hand it to them. During the by-election campaign they did it very well indeed, and they have continued to hide it. They will not vote as they speak, but they will not be able to hide it continually. The attention of people is directed to what happens in other States where we see Labor Party policy in its true aspects. We know that the member for Adelaide, and other members opposite, have not mentioned the true basic beliefs of the Labor Party and the directions that come from Labor Party conferences and executive meetings. Although they do not mention them, it does not mean that they do not subscribe to them.

Mr. Loveday: All the best things in life need finding.

Mr. HALL: Yes. Much of the activity of the Opposition is directed to hiding its policy. Efforts like that by the member for Adelaide tend to further hide the true Labor image. It is the duty of the honourable member to reveal that image so that elections can be

fought in their true light. It should not be a Party that says it can provide everything for nothing. Its members say they will provide something cheaper for the people without making any reference to the actual cost that must be borne. We had an instance of this in the Stirling by-election when £200,000 was offered to two southern district councils to develop the South Coast tourist trade. Members opposite know that these things apply equally to the primary producers who use superphosphate and that it should not be directed to any one part of the State, or even the Commonwealth. The sum of £200,000 was promised and it had been calculated at so much a vote. It gets down to that; but the rest of the State was forgotten. It was purely an election incentive, and those offering it thought they would get some advantage.

Mr. Casey: Do you know what the tourist trade is worth each year? It is about £125,000,000.

Mr. HALL: Stirling is not the only district that wishes to have tourist resorts. In my humble district I have areas that would welcome a share of the money that the State devotes to the tourist industry but they would not welcome an unfair distribution of the money.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: It did not make a favourable impact at Port Lincoln.

Mr. HALL: No, nor could it be expected to do so. Many places in South Australia need assistance for their tourist industries, and they were not amused that £200,000 was promised to one small section of the State. I think the reference to Mr. Stevens's being unable to attend the declaration of the poll for the Stirling by-election was, to say the least of it, very weak indeed. It was stated that our new member arrived on the steps of this Parliament House without a welcoming committee to show him around the building; he was supposed to have been left cold. Can one imagine anybody being left colder than the defeated candidate for Stirling? He was dropped so hard that not even one member of the Party for which he stood in that by-election informed him about the declaration of the poll: apparently no member took the trouble to tell him where it might take place or to communicate with him about attending.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: He is still thawing out.

Mr. HALL: I do not think he has had any notice taken of him by members of the Labor Party since the results became known on the Saturday night. The Leader of the Opposition

in his speech did his best to try to criticize this Budget, but his best did not amount to much. I say that not as a personal reflection on the Leader but because I consider that he could not find many points to properly criticize. The Budget is a progressive one; in fact, it is one of a series of progressive Budgets. I congratulate the Treasurer on taking the step of budgeting for a deficit of nearly £500,000. He stated that he had taken into account the favourable rains that have occurred in this State this year. However, to take those rains into account is in itself a risk, because we know that if it does not rain further this year the season will fall short of expectations.

When we look at last year's favourable Budget results we find that they were favourable because of an unexpected upturn in one Government department, namely, the Railways, and it is on the cards that in budgeting for a deficit of nearly £500,000 we may in fact experience a downturn in some Government departments, perhaps because of seasonal reasons. Therefore, it is not without risk that the Treasurer budgets for such a deficit. I congratulate him and the Government on taking this step in order to provide as much employment as possible in this State. We know, and most employers know, that unemployment in this State has fallen to a very low level. If we want people in the country to carry out ordinary unskilled jobs for a couple of months we just cannot get them, even though we offer such facilities as boarding or living quarters. It ill behoves anyone to focus criticism on this matter, because the unemployment position is nowhere near as bad as some members would have us believe. I believe the Leader was misguided in directing too much criticism to something that really does not exist to anywhere near the extent he would have us believe.

One of the Leader's main criticisms concerned the purchase of crushed metal for Naracoorte. It is rather unusual for a Leader of a Labor Opposition to have such regard for State boundaries. I believe it is the Opposition's policy to abolish States as we know them, yet the Leader decried the fact that crushed metal was purchased in Victoria by a Government department in order to provide a cheaper job in South Australia than would have been the case had that metal been bought at a South Australian quarry site. That does not seem to add up to me, as it comes from the Leader of an Opposition which advocates the non-retention of State boundaries.

Mr. Corcoran: That was not the only issue involved, and I think you have missed the most important point.

Mr. HALL: I have made my point, and if the member for Millicent wishes to educate me further in this matter I shall be happy to listen to him when he speaks in this debate.

Mr. Bywaters: You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink.

Mr. HALL: I do not intend to say much about the member for Gawler's contribution, except that I noted with much satisfaction the attention he gave to the advertisement on behalf of the Liberal Party.

Mr. Ryan: He gave more attention to it than the public did.

Mr. HALL: It certainly speaks well for the effectiveness of this advertisement that he was so engrossed with it, and I hope he will heed future announcements and pronouncements by the Liberal Party. One thing I wish to mention sounds a note of criticism (I hope not of too severe a nature) of the comments of the member for Torrens (Mr. Coumbe). The honourable member perhaps was a little misinformed. If my memory serves me correctly, I think he said that the construction of temporary school buildings had ceased, but I must disagree with him because I have in mind the Para Hills school in my district. I know the school started with a small enrolment, but it has grown very quickly. My point is that before the first brick was laid Para Hills was very carefully planned as a settlement. The plan was to provide 1,250 houses over a period of three years, and in fact that number of houses will be completed within that time. Therefore, in this instance the Education Department knew very well how many students would be enrolled within a specified time. I maintain that there has been an economic waste in putting up a whole school of temporary buildings to the stage where we have them crammed in on a site side by side without there being any spine or backbone of solid construction to the school. I am happy to know that an infants school of solid construction will be built at Para Hills. However, I question the need for starting a new school in temporary construction.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: I think the honourable member will agree that it was not quite so certain that the Para Hills housing would proceed at the rate originally envisaged.

Mr. HALL: I would say that once the first 50 or 100 students had been enrolled the department could have relied upon the scheme for Para Hills being successfully completed.

That number of students would have required only several temporary buildings, and these could have been removed easily and a decent type of slab or brick construction started. As it is now, the school is a conglomeration of temporary buildings. I am not complaining that Para Hills has not obtained facilities; I am grateful that the Education Department has provided facilities.

Mr. McKee: Then what are you squealing about?

Mr. HALL: I question the economics of constructing temporary buildings that will have to be removed and replaced by solid construction buildings.

Mr. Riches: You cannot be certain that they will be removed.

Mr. HALL: The economic waste from first erecting temporary buildings at this school must be considerable. Earlier this session I asked the Treasurer a question in which I sought a comparison of costs between temporary and solid construction. I cannot at the moment find the question in *Hansard*, but from memory I think the saving in temporary construction is not even as high as 20 per cent.

Mr. Nankivell: It is 17 per cent.

Mr. HALL: Yes, I think that is about correct. Let us forget the Para Hills school for the moment and think of future schools. Will it pay economically to construct temporary buildings at these schools? If their use saves only 15, 17 or 20 per cent, I cannot imagine that they will eventually be replaced. I think they will be maintained and that their ultimate cost will be higher than the cost of solid construction. Leaving aside aesthetics and comfort, on a cost basis alone I urge that solid construction be adopted. This can be done in relation to additions and new schools if there is forward planning.

Mr. Loveday: Portions of schools are of temporary buildings because of a change in population.

Mr. HALL: I agree that there would be a place for development. The Balaklava High School is a first-class, well-staffed school that has all possible amenities and a good local support from parents and friends. The headmaster can give the expected enrolment of the school for many years, yet even now more temporary buildings are being constructed there. We are grateful for the accommodation, but there is no sudden emergency: it is a plan coming to an end. The need for the buildings has been known for years, so why, for a saving of up to 20 per cent, are these buildings being constructed? They will be written off

long before permanent buildings, and future taxpayers will pay for the mistake. I should like someone to attempt to justify the use of temporary buildings when no emergency exists and when enrolments are proceeding according to expectations. Until I receive that justification I will consider that the further use of temporary buildings is a complete mistake.

Mr. Clark: Is this a new school you are talking about?

Mr. HALL: I am sorry that the honourable member was temporarily absent. Apparently there is a saving of only 20 per cent in temporary buildings compared with solid construction, so surely it is economically wasteful to use temporary buildings when the needs for a school can be predicted some years ahead.

Mr. Clark: Did you try asking a question about it?

Mr. HALL: I asked a question about costs and was told that temporary construction saved under 20 per cent. I do not think this small saving justifies the use of these buildings. In Elizabeth, there is a different story.

Mr. Clark: I am not complaining about it.

Mr. HALL: No, and I am envious of the honourable member's acquisitions. It is obvious to anyone who drives around Elizabeth that it has first-class schools. Why is it that so many of the new schools at Elizabeth are of permanent construction?

Mr. Clark: Only one is not.

Mr. HALL: That is so. I admit that one or two permanent schools there have a few temporary additions, but Elizabeth has received better treatment than any area in this State. I will not say that it has received preferential treatment, as I am not qualified to say what every area receives.

Mr. Lawn: There is an obvious answer—good representation.

Mr. HALL: I am not sure that the answer is so obvious. The member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) dealt at length with the difficulties associated with housing in his area and in the State in general. He drew attention to the fact that payments for owning a house were burdensome to some families, and I do not think any member will deny that in some cases they are high in relation to wages. However, we should realize that payments in this State are lower than those in New South Wales.

Mr. Loveday: That is a matter of opinion.

Mr. HALL: No; visitors and members of Parliament will tell the honourable member that.

Mr. Loveday: I do not need to inquire; I have had a look myself.

Mr. HALL: It is good for the honourable member to look for himself, but I think he will find that the housing position in New South Wales is worse than that in South Australia.

Mr. Loveday: What about the amount of work the New South Wales Housing Commission is doing?

Mr. HALL: It is doing a good job, and I wish it every success.

Mr. Loveday: You are speaking as if you know.

Mr. HALL: It has been said over the last 10 years that economically the housing position in this State has worsened, so I ask the honourable member what will happen if the campaign for a 35-hour week is successful.

Mr. Riches: Did you say that in the Stirling by-election campaign?

Mr. HALL: I am putting this and hoping that it will be answered.

Mr. Loveday: But your Government claims that housing has become better in South Australia under the 40-hour week than it was under the 44-hour week.

Mr. HALL: We hope so.

Mr. Loveday: Then what are you arguing about?

Mr. HALL: After the Second World War there was a sellers' market and many anomalies existed in price structures. There was a black market under Socialist controls from Canberra. Many restrictive measures forced prices up. Since they have been removed and since we have gradually achieved true competition, we have seen the market come around more to a buyers' market, and this transition has in many respects counteracted the 40-hour week. A look at the economic situation today reveals that in most industries, and especially the building trade, there is much competition. Members opposite will not deny that competition among builders of houses is fairly severe. A consideration of the component parts of a house will show that they are priced fairly competitively. If we have a reduction of hours from 40 to 35, will members opposite tell me what will happen to the prices of houses and the ratio between the necessary weekly payments on a house and the family pay packet? I should like the answer to that by members who advocate a 35-hour week and something better in the way of houses for people, some better means for them to become owners, and some better economic ratio between the sum needed to buy or rent a house and the total weekly cash intake into the family. It is only

one question, but I believe it to be vital. Comment has been made on the last 10 years; let us see honourable members' comments on the next 10 years, on the achieving of a 35-hour week. I want to know.

Mr. Fred Walsh: I should be surprised if the honourable member were happy about it.

Mr. HALL: I shall be happy if it is factual, if the honourable member can give me a good account of how we shall maintain the present ratio if we adopt a 35-hour week. We should like to know about it.

Mr. Loveday: Would you believe it if you were told?

Mr. HALL: We do not want to mention unconventional methods of finance.

Mr. Fred Walsh: We do not expect to get the 35-hour week next week or even next year.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr. HALL: We want this exercise carried out in the context of our present financial set-up. We do not want it carried out by some fanciful means of obtaining credit from some fanciful source.

Mr. Loveday: The honourable member does not believe in that!

Mr. HALL: The honourable member must know that there will not be any radical changes in Australia in these matters. He is basing a solution to the problem on something improbable. I consider it no answer unless it be to explain it in the present context of finance.

Mr. Loveday: In the Budget we are discussing, much Loan money at 1 per cent, 2 per cent and 3 per cent is involved.

Mr. HALL: I hope the honourable member is not complaining about that.

Mr. Loveday: I am not; I am only pointing it out to the honourable member.

Mr. HALL: One aspect of the Housing Trust's operations in South Australia about which I am not happy is the building of skyscraper flats in this city. I hope they will fulfil a need and that the proper tenants are found for them, but obviously they are not meant to house families.

Mr. Millhouse: Why does the honourable member say that?

Mr. HALL: I think it is generally recognized that apartments, from which children cannot get down to the ground to play and mix with other children, are more like prisons to the young people than they are homes. I quote now from a report, from London, that appeared in the *Advertiser* of September 25. People live in apartments in other parts of the world, and this is a fairly responsible report

about families living in these skyscrapers in other parts of the world. The report states:

Skyscrapers are breeding delinquents. A new cause has been found for juvenile delinquency.

Mr. Loveday: Who is the author?

Mr. HALL: I will come to that in a minute. The report continues:

It is skyscrapers. Britain hasn't really got any skyscrapers by the standards of New York, but this doesn't matter much. The trouble starts after the fourth floor, says Lady Allen of Hurtwood, who has been directing an inquiry for the London County Council.

I do not think one could say that the London County Council was an irresponsible body.

Mr. Loveday: They are all Labor men.

Mr. HALL: This is most fortunate. It means that, the direction of these inquiries being by Labor men, the truth contained in the report will not be in any way questioned by members opposite.

Mr. Clark: The honourable member will immediately stop quoting from it?

Mr. HALL: No. In the circumstances I am happy to quote from it in this manner. This estimable report continues:

Children living in high apartment blocks don't have a chance of playing with children of their own age. We shall find we are breeding a new delinquent generation . . . They have found that 70 per cent of children under five years living above the third floor of apartment complexes "seldom or never" play with other children.

The vital words are "third floor". Several mothers were interviewed, and the report states:

One told her that the only time she dared open the windows to air her 11th floor apartment was when her two children, aged three and six, were safely in the bath or in bed.

We can sympathize with a mother in that situation. The report continues:

Another said: "I didn't want to keep my children hemmed in, but for their own physical safety I had to. When they started to go to school it was awful. They wouldn't mix, they were nervous and shy."

A third mother remarked: "My boy can't bear being away from me now. I just can't get him to leave me and stay at school."

Mr. Fred Walsh: Where was that?

Mr. HALL: This is a London report on families living in tall apartments.

Mr. Millhouse: But that happens to families living in single-storey houses.

Mr. HALL: The report then says:

The problem . . . seems to be an insuperable one.

It goes on to give further facts about families living in those apartment houses. If the flats to be built in Adelaide are to cater for married

couples without children, they will indeed serve a good purpose. We have heard much lately about tall flat buildings in this city. I contend that we are heading in entirely the wrong direction if we intend to put families into these buildings. I can well understand that anyone above the third floor would be loath to let small children of an impressionable age, under school age, go out to play. We could ask, "Where would they play?"

Mr. Loveday: In New South Wales the Housing Commission considers the needs of people who have children.

Mr. HALL: I commend it for that attitude. There must be a saturation point in the City of Adelaide for flats for married couples without children.

Mr. Clark: Encourage people to go to the country.

Mr. HALL: Let us not build too many flats in the City of Adelaide or house children in them. I hope these matters have been considered by the Housing Trust, because we have not been told that they will be for married couples only. I hope that that is the intention of the trust and that further planning will be done with that in mind.

Mr. Clark: That is what the trust normally does.

Mr. HALL: I hope that will be the policy in this case. Some people have been carried away with the idea that families will be well housed in these flats. We could ask what is the purpose of the Housing Trust. The answer is to build houses to the best advantage of the people who need them. It is not within the province of the trust to enter into politics. I believe that the trust is not without fault in entering into local government affairs in the Elizabeth and Salisbury area. I consider that much of the trouble that originated and has been generated in that area is due to the interference of the trust.

Mr. Clark: One particular gentleman.

Mr. HALL: I am not blaming any person, but I lay the blame for it at the trust's feet. I resent a Government department's interfering in local government politics. It is the trust's business to build houses, and local government business should be in tenants' hands, not the trust's.

Mr. Jennings: Would you call the Housing Trust a Government department?

Mr. HALL: We know how much this Parliament is concerned with the trust's activities, and how members treat it as a Government department as much as they can.

Mr. Lawn: They don't treat us as a Government department would.

Mr. HALL: It has interfered with council matters and has put undue pressure on local government authorities in the Elizabeth and Salisbury area. It is enough for the trust to provide houses efficiently, and it should not intrude into politics, local or otherwise. I am happy to support the Budget. I hope that next year we shall see as successful a report of this year's operations as we have seen of last year's. I hope that the State will receive a good general rain through the agricultural areas and, if it does, we can look forward to the successful completion of this programme.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I support the first line. I was pleased to hear some remarks of the honourable member for Gouger. At least he excites interest on this side even if we do not agree with what he says. He mentioned that he would like someone to answer his query on the 35-hour week regarding extra production. I do not know that I am the right one to answer that, but he threw down the gauntlet to me by saying that he hoped the following speaker would answer his query. It was suggested that perhaps he would not be educated even if someone did answer his query, but I will attempt to do so, and whether or not I educate him is up to him. There was a time when the self-same thing was said about the 56-hour week, the 48-hour week, the 44-hour week and, more recently, the 40-hour week. Similar ideas were advanced about each of them.

Mr. Jennings: You could go back further. It was said when little children were working in coal mines in England.

Mr. BYWATERS: I cannot remember as far back as that, but having read about it I recall that it was so. More recently, I recall that it was said concerning the 40-hour week. The Minister of Works, by interjection, perhaps gave one of the answers when he said that know-how would come into it. The honourable member for West Torrens, who is active in industrial matters, said, by way of interjection, that we did not expect to achieve it next week or even perhaps next year, but that it was something that trade unions and all thinking people looked forward to for the future. We realize that automation will cause a shortening of hours, whether members opposite like it or not, and it will not be our doing altogether but circumstances will guide the decision. As the member for Whyalla so wisely pointed out, this would be determined by a court and not by individuals. It would not matter whether

the trade union movement advanced the best argument for it, the court would determine the issue after considering all sides of the question. It will come about as other reductions have come about in the past. I hope these remarks will enlighten the honourable member for Gouger on this matter, even if he does not agree with them.

The honourable member referred to the Stirling by-election and said he thought the candidate for the Labor Party, Mr. Stevens, was dropped when the election was over. I deny that because it is not so. Prior to the election I was with Mr. Stevens in Jervois, and we saw the present member for Stirling canvassing. We gave him a cheery wave to which he responded. During the election campaign there appeared to be no animosity between the two candidates. Mr. Stevens said he would be a candidate in the next general election, and I think he will be. With other members, I welcome the honourable member for Stirling. He is one of my near neighbours, and I trust that we shall work in close co-operation for his district and mine which have much in common, and that we shall have on occasions joint schemes affecting both of us. He can be assured of my support in them, and I know that he will follow in the footsteps of his predecessor and continue the amicable relationship that existed between Mr. Jenkins and me. During the by-election campaign things were said to which I took exception. Sometimes, particularly during election campaigns, things are said at public meetings that sometimes the speaker would rather retract, usually after they have been published in the newspaper. The Minister of Lands, speaking at Mount Compass, said that if the Labor Party came to power following the by-election a dictatorship by the metropolitan area would exist. I cannot understand why the Minister said this, and I believe that he did not mean it. However, it was said. At present the Parliamentary Labor Party in the House of Assembly has 10 country members and nine metropolitan members. We do not believe in discriminating between city and country. We believe in working in the best interests of the State as a whole. I assure the Minister that when the Labor Party comes to power after the next election it will not have a dictatorship by the metropolitan area as he suggests.

Mr. Shannon: I think the Minister had Grote Street in mind.

Mr. BYWATERS: I do not know whether he did.

Mr. Ryan: What about your North Terrace?

Mr. Shannon: It is not in the race with your Grote Street.

Mr. Jennings: Don't you think that the Minister could be excused, because he is not used to addressing Party meetings?

Mr. BYWATERS: He will improve with experience. Speaking at a meeting at Macclesfield, the Attorney-General (Mr. Rowe) said that, despite a terrific barrage of propaganda throughout South Australia against the State Government on the question of decentralization, only one Labor member had given evidence to the committee that the Government had set up to report on the subject. He said that if there were a Labor Government there would be less practical decentralization than there is now. The Minister's attention was drawn to the fact that his statement was incorrect: the Leader was able to prove that other Labor members had appeared before the committee. So, two days later the Attorney-General issued a statement to the press saying that what he had said at Macclesfield about only one member of the Australian Labor Party giving evidence before the Industries Development Committee on decentralization of industry was not strictly correct; he had since found that at the request of the committee the Leader of the Opposition had presented a written statement. He said that the committee had informed members of Parliament that it was taking evidence in their respective areas and that various members of the Labor Party attended the committee's hearings in their areas and, in some cases, made statements. However, Mr. Rowe said that the main emphasis of his remarks was correct—that the evidence submitted by the A.L.P. was directed more to the desirability of decentralization than to a practical means whereby it could be established.

I appeared before this committee and gave evidence on behalf of Murray Bridge. I presented constructive evidence on how decentralization could take place and I made recommendations to the committee, the members of which subsequently said that they were pleased with the recommendations, which would be considered and which could even be included in their report. The recommendations were designed to encourage decentralization. I had the opportunity of appearing before the committee on behalf of Tailem Bend, and with the assistance of men associated with the railway workshops and of other citizens I presented evidence. I think that the evidence will be available to members later.

Mr. McKee: When?

Mr. BYWATERS: I do not know, but I hope the evidence will be available. Again, the evidence was of a practical nature and was not related solely to the desirability of having decentralization. I put forward constructive suggestions to assist decentralization. I suggested products that could be manufactured at Tailem Bend. I have not yet had a reply to my representations, but I should imagine that my comments have been placed before the Railways Commissioner.

Mr. Loveday: Perhaps when the Attorney-General reads your speech he will make another retraction.

Mr. BYWATERS: I doubt it. I know that other members of the Opposition appeared before the committee and gave evidence. Of course, the member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) did not give evidence, but knowing him I have no doubt that he was associated with the evidence that was presented on behalf of Port Augusta.

Mr. Clark: Members co-operated with their local councils in getting evidence ready.

Mr. Shannon: The member for Stuart would have had to be careful, since he was a member of the committee.

Mr. BYWATERS: Many members were associated with the preparation of the evidence that was submitted to the committee, even though they did not appear before the committee to give that evidence. The presence of members at the committee's hearings was surely sufficient evidence of their interest. I did not like the Attorney-General's inference that the Labor Party was only talking of decentralization and doing nothing about it. That was an unjust comment. We are definitely interested in decentralization. I have made concrete suggestions here and elsewhere as to how decentralization can be achieved. For instance, I have frequently contended that it would be better to take people to the water than to take the water to the people. The Murray River flows through my district, which would be eminently suitable for increased primary production. With intense cultivation will come other industries. I have frequently recommended that the Lands Department acquire land for intense cultivation on the banks of the lower reaches of the Murray. People are no longer producing vegetables in great quantities in the city but are going elsewhere. Some have settled in the district represented by the member for Gouger, but the underground water supply there is limited whereas water is not limited beside the Murray. Several market-

gardeners have already established in the Murray district and have proved that intense cultivation can be undertaken there. Unfortunately, large tracts of land have been subdivided and are lying idle because of lack of water. The Engineering and Water Supply Department will not provide water for irrigation. Such provisions are a function of the Lands Department, through its irrigation branch. The Lands Department will not supply water where the Engineering and Water Supply Department operates, and *vice versa*. This has created problems. However, positive recommendations as to how population can be taken into my district have been made.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: Who owns the land?

Mr. BYWATERS: It is mostly privately owned at present.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: You would need acquisition.

Mr. BYWATERS: Yes, at a fair valuation. Some places have been sold for subdivisional purposes, and probably other places would be sold if the department sought the land. I think a number of people would sell land for

the purpose. Some has already been sold privately.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: Have they applied to the Irrigation Department for water?

Mr. BYWATERS: Two of the Minister's officers went to the district on one occasion and were taken over suitable land, but their report did not favour going into the area because the Engineering and Water Supply Department was already operating there. The report is in the Minister's office and he is welcome to read what Mr. Ligertwood and Mr. Gilchrist said.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: I cannot see any difficulty about it.

Mr. BYWATERS: No. I agree that there would be no great worry about it. I think it could be done and I would appreciate any assistance the Minister could give in this regard. I ask that I have leave to continue my remarks.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 5.22 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 10, at 2 p.m.